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Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly: regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Letter dated 15 June 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Sao Tome and Principe to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the current Chairman of the Committee, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the report of the twenty-fifth ministerial meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, which was held from 14 to 18 May 2007 in the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe (see annex).

I should like to request you to have this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 101 (e) of the preliminary list of items to be included in the provisional agenda of the sixty-second session, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ovidio Manuel Barbosa **Pequeño**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/62/50.

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Annex to the letter dated 15 June 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Sao Tome and Principe to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Report of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa on its twenty-fifth ministerial meeting in Sao Tome, 14-18 May 2007

Introduction

The twenty-fifth ministerial meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa was held in Sao Tome, Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe, from 14 to 18 May 2007.

The following member States took part in the meeting: the Republic of Angola, the Republic of Burundi, the Republic of Cameroon, the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, the Gabonese Republic, the Republic of Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe. The Central African Republic was absent. The Republic of Chad, although unable to be present, nevertheless transmitted its contribution to the proceedings.

The opening ceremony featured:

- A message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, read out by Ms. Agnès Marcaillou, Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General at the twenty-fifth ministerial meeting;
- A message from the Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), read out by Mr. Nelson Cosme, Under-Secretary-General for Human Integration, Peace, Security and Stability.

The opening address was delivered by H.E. Mr. Fradique Bandeira Melo de Menezes, President of the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe.

The Committee took much of its inspiration from proposals made in that address, in particular the idea of an initiative to draft a legal instrument on small arms and light weapons control in Central Africa. It decided to name the initiative the "Sao Tome initiative".

Summary of proceedings

I. Adoption of the agenda

5. The Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Adoption of the agenda of the twenty-fifth ministerial meeting.
2. Election of the Bureau.
3. Report of the outgoing Bureau, submitted by its Chairman.
4. Review of the geopolitical and security situation in some States members of the Committee:

(i) Republic of Burundi;

(ii) Central African Republic;

(iii) Democratic Republic of the Congo;

(iv) Republic of Chad.

5. Consideration of the situation in Darfur and its impact on countries members of the Committee.

6. Developments relating to security in the Great Lakes region.

7. Inter-State security cooperation among the Central African countries:

(i) Report on preparations for the Bahr-el-Ghazal joint military exercise (November 2007);

(ii) Measures to combat cross-border crime;

(iii) Briefing on the conclusions of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) Seminar on Cross-border Security Problems;

(iv) Consideration of the project for a subregional conference on cross-border security problems.

8. Promotion of disarmament and arms limitation programmes in Central Africa:

(i) Reports on the implementation of the Programme of Priority Activities for the implementation in Central Africa of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects;

(ii) Relationship between the Programme of Priority Activities and the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region;

(iii) Participation by ECCAS in the standardized instrument for reporting military expenditures;

(iv) Project for the drafting of a legal instrument on small arms and light weapons control in Central Africa;

(v) Project for the drafting of a code of conduct for defence and security forces in Central Africa;

(vi) Implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) in Central Africa.

9. Report by the ECCAS secretariat on the institutional evolution of the subregional peace and security structures and mechanisms; (strengthening of the Supreme Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX), status of the ratifications of the protocol on COPAX, operationalization of the Central African Early Warning System (MARAC).

10. Exchange of views on methods of work and the programme of work: revitalization and rationalization of activities.

11. Date and place of the next meeting.

12. Other matters.

13. Adoption of the report of the twenty-fifth ministerial meeting.

II. Election of the Bureau

The Committee elected a Bureau comprised of the following countries:

- Chairman: Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe
- First Vice-Chairman: Republic of Cameroon
- Second Vice-Chairman: Republic of Angola
- Rapporteur: Republic of Gabon

III. Report of the outgoing Bureau, submitted by its Chairman

The Committee noted with interest the report on the activities of the outgoing Bureau, submitted by its Chairman. It commended the dynamism with which the Bureau had performed its duties and, in particular, its active contribution, in cooperation with the secretariat, to the revitalization of the Committee's activities and the preparation and organization of the twenty-fifth ministerial meeting. The Committee commended the outgoing Bureau for the competence and skill with which it had guided the work.

IV. Review of the geopolitical and security situation in some States members of the Committee

Developments in the situation in Central Africa, particularly in the countries covered by this geopolitical and security review, have shown sharp contracts since the Committee's previous meeting. Despite some genuine advances in the peace processes under way, the persistence of tension, the deterioration of the security situation, and the resurgence of frequent armed confrontations highlight the fragility of peace in the countries covered.

The at times dramatic degradation of the humanitarian situation and the persistence of serious human rights violations are particularly alarming.

The situation manifestly requires the parties concerned, the other countries of the subregion and the international community to redouble their efforts to promote national reconciliation, build peace and usher in a new era of development for peoples who have been victims of the scourge of war for too long.

(i) Republic of Burundi

The Committee welcomed the progress achieved in the situation in Burundi, in particular:

(a) The progress on the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement signed on 7 September 2006 in Dar es Salaam between the Government of Burundi and Mr. Agathon Rwasa's Forces nationales de libération (PALIPEHUTU-FNL);

(b) The efforts to improve relations between the Government and the media, relations between political parties and relations with civil society;

(c) The release of former dignitaries arrested on the charge of preparing a coup d'état;

(d) The noticeable easing of political tension and the progress made in implementing the policy of national reconciliation;

(e) The pursuit of the disarmament and demobilization process and the progress achieved in disbanding militias.

The Committee welcomed the improvement of the military and security situation in Burundi. However, it deplored the continued lack of security in the country owing to the proliferation of firearms among the population and delays in implementing the Agreement. It urged the Government and PALIPEHUTU-FNL to ensure that the Agreement was fully implemented and to continue to cooperate closely in a spirit of openness in order to reach a solution to all outstanding problems. It also invited the South African mediator, the members of the regional peace initiative and the other partners to lend support to the smooth implementation of the Agreement.

The Committee encouraged the Government to continue the efforts already under way to strengthen the democratic process in Burundi, in particular by pursuing the dialogue with the political parties, cooperating with civil society, ensuring respect for the rule of law and human rights, including freedom of expression and freedom of the press, and promoting national reconciliation.

It also encouraged PALIPEHUTU-FNL to honour its commitments and to work with determination towards the full implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement in order to expedite the return of a comprehensive peace in Burundi and to alleviate the suffering of the people.

It welcomed the measures taken by the Government of Burundi to prosecute the perpetrators of human rights violations and urged it to bring to justice, without exception, anyone guilty of such acts. It also welcomed the positive impact of the peace accord between the Government of Burundi and PALIPEHUTU-FNL on security conditions and protection of human rights.

It encouraged the Government to continue its efforts to tackle the country's acute socio-economic problems and resolve serious conflicts over land ownership and use.

It launched an urgent appeal to the international community and donors to provide all necessary support to the country in the implementation of its emergency and rehabilitation programme, its economic recovery and development programme, the National Poverty Reduction Strategy, the National Peacebuilding Strategy and the rapid completion of the programme for the demobilization and reintegration of former combatants.

(ii) Central African Republic

The Committee expressed its deep concern about the instability characterizing the situation in the Central African Republic.

It encouraged the authorities and all the political actors to give priority to dialogue, resolve their differences peacefully and work towards the strengthening of peace and democracy in the Central African Republic.

The Committee welcomed the decision of President Bozize to initiate an inclusive dialogue with the opposition parties and the representatives of armed rebel groups. It encouraged the Panel of the Wise to pursue, with the help of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA), the efforts to organize that dialogue.

It also welcomed the meetings organized with the help of BONUCA between the Government and the political parties which have helped to ease tensions.

However, it expressed grave concern about the deterioration of the security situation in the Central African Republic, in particular:

(a) The activities of armed gangs, and "road blockers" and the repeated attacks by rebels in the north, north-east, north-west and centre of the country, which result in multiple human rights violations;

(b) Armed groups' repeated violations of territorial integrity in the north, north-east and north-west of the country;

(c) The proliferation of small arms and light weapons, particularly in the north-east;

(d) The growing number of murders and armed robberies.

The Committee condemned the actions of the rebellion and rejected any attempt to take power by anticonstitutional means.

It appealed to the international community to give the Central African Republic the support necessary to secure its borders and improve the overall security situation, notably by restructuring the national defence and security forces and strengthening their operational capacities. The Committee welcomed the contribution of the Central African Multinational Force (FOMUC) of CEMAC to efforts to restore peace and security in the Central African Republic and called for its mandate to be extended beyond 30 June 2007. It urged the international community to provide all necessary support to the Multinational Force and if appropriate, to ECCAS, in order to help the Central African Republic tackle the lack of security in its territory.

The Committee welcomed the decision of the United Nations to deploy an operation to secure the borders of the Central African Republic, Chad and the Sudan and the dispatch in this connection of a multidisciplinary technical assessment mission to the region.

It expressed concern at the steady deterioration of the humanitarian and human rights situation in the Central African Republic as a result of the insecurity caused by armed rebel movements and retaliatory actions by the Central African armed forces.

In the socio-economic sphere, the Committee appealed to bilateral and multilateral donors and international financial institutions to pay special attention to the economic and financial situation of the Central African Republic and to provide it with the necessary support.

(iii) Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Committee welcomed the significant progress made in the implementation of the transition process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including the successful completion of the electoral process with the peaceful holding of the presidential election and the legislative, provincial and senatorial elections. It applauded the political, financial, technical and logistical efforts made by the international community in that regard and congratulated the Congolese people on their maturity and sense of civic responsibility.

The Committee deplored the deadly clashes that had taken place from 22 to 24 March 2007 in Kinshasa between guards of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) assigned to protect former Vice-President Jean-Pierre Bemba and the other FARDC soldiers, which had resulted in numerous civilian and military victims. It urged the country's political leaders to give priority to conciliation and harmony in the best interests of the Congolese people.

The Committee expressed concern at the continued precarious security situation in some provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, especially in Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu and northern Katanga.

It condemned the acts of violence that had occurred in Bas-Congo, causing many civilian and military victims. It also regretted the resistance to *brassage* of armed groups in FARDC in the eastern part of the country.

It welcomed the *mixage* of General Laurent Nkunda's forces with FARDC in North Kivu and called for continued efforts towards a complete *brassage* of those forces.

The Committee expressed concern at the weak operational capacities of FARDC in the light of the scale of security problems in the country and called on the international community to provide urgent assistance to the Government in the implementation of reform of the security sector with a view to the establishment of well-managed professional security agencies that showed due respect for the law and human rights.

The Committee urged the political leaders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the opposition parties to respect the principles of transparency, openness and tolerance and to avoid the use of violence.

The Committee expressed concern at the persistence of allegations of serious violations of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It welcomed the measures taken by the authorities to combat impunity and urged them to pursue such measures, ensuring that everyone guilty of such violations was, without distinction, prosecuted.

The Committee also expressed deep concern at the scale of the humanitarian crisis in the country and urged donors to provide substantial assistance to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to enable it to deal with the situation.

(iv) Republic of Chad

The Committee expressed deep concern at the multiple destabilization attempts against Chad owing to repeated attacks by rebel groups based in Darfur and abuse perpetrated by militias against the civilian population.

It nevertheless welcomed some signs of progress in the situation in Chad, including:

(a) The conclusion of peace agreements between the Government of Chad and some factions of the political-military opposition and the consequent integration into the February 2007 Government of senior officials of that opposition;

(b) The continuation of diplomatic activity to defuse the crisis between Chad and the Sudan;

(c) The efforts made to relaunch the process relating to the Tripoli Agreement of 8 February 2006 on the normalization of relations between Chad and the Sudan;

(d) The signature on 2 May 2007 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, of a peace agreement between Chad and the Sudan.

The Committee expressed deep concern at the multifaceted humanitarian crisis in eastern and southern Chad, with multiple acts of abuse against Sudanese and Central African refugees and persons displaced by the Janjaweed militias.

It condemned the grave human rights violations perpetrated against refugees, displaced persons, civilian populations and humanitarian workers in eastern Chad. It appealed to the international community and the United Nations to help the Government of Chad ensure the safety of refugees from Darfur living in camps in Chad, provide greater assistance to them and guarantee the camps' neutrality.

It welcomed in this regard the dispatch to the region by the Secretary-General of the United Nations of two assessment missions to prepare the expected deployment of a multidisciplinary United Nations presence in the area pursuant to Security Council resolution 1706 (2006).

V. Consideration of the situation in Darfur and its impact on countries members of the Committee

The Committee noted with profound concern information about the deterioration of the situation in Darfur and its far-reaching consequences for regional security, including:

(a) The influx of refugees and the deteriorating security situation in countries of the region;

(b) The growth of illegal cross-border movements of weapons and persons;

(c) The worsening environmental and security situation in areas close to the border, which seriously endangered civilians, displaced persons and refugees;

(d) The threats to the stability, security and territorial integrity of the Sudan's neighbours, particularly the Central African Republic and the Republic of Chad;

(e) The growing risk that the area where the three countries' borders met would become an area of unrest and a favourite haven of mercenaries, armed groups and rebels ready to take part in any action to destabilize the countries of the subregion.

The Committee appealed to the international community to increase its efforts to ensure that the borders between Chad, the Central African Republic and the Sudan were properly secured and that assistance to refugees and displaced persons, the main victims of hostilities in the region, was increased.

VI. Developments relating to the security in the Great Lakes region

At the subregional level and within the framework of the Tripartite Plus Joint Commission (Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda), the Committee encouraged the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Rwanda, the Republic of Burundi and the Republic of Uganda to continue their efforts to cooperate more closely in combating the armed groups on their common borders.

It welcomed the strengthened cooperation between the Republic of Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of Burundi and the consequent improvement in the security situation in the Great Lakes region.

It noted with interest the information provided in this connection on the activities of the Tripartite Plus Joint Commission, the relaunch of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL), the signature of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region and the regular exchange of high-level delegations between the countries of the Tripartite Plus Joint Commission for the discussion of bilateral and subregional matters.

VII. Inter-State security cooperation among the Central African countries

(i) Report on preparations for the Bahr-el-Gazal joint military exercise (November 2007)

The Committee noted with interest the information provided to the ECCAS secretariat on the status of preparations for the Bahr-el-Gazal joint military exercise. It welcomed the assurances given to the Secretary-General of ECCAS by the Government of Chad regarding the deadline of November 2007 for holding the exercise.

(ii) Measures to combat cross-border crime

The Committee expressed profound concern at the persistence of border security problems in the subregion, including cross-border crime. It encouraged member countries to devise appropriate responses, particularly in the context of a concerted subregional approach the terms of which could be considered at the planned subregional conference.

The Committee took note of the information communicated by the Republic of Angola on the recent adoption of a law governing the conditions under which aliens might be present in that country.

(iii) Briefing on the conclusions of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) Seminar on Cross-border Security Problems

The Committee took note of the information communicated by the Office for Disarmament Affairs regarding the Seminar on Cross-border Security Problems planned within the framework of CEMAC, under the aegis of the Department of Political Affairs.

It also took note of the fact that the Seminar had not been held on the dates proposed, and it reiterated its wish to be informed of the Seminar's conclusions in order to consider ways of extending to ECCAS the security framework that would be suggested.

(iv) Consideration of the project for a subregional conference on cross-border security problems

The Committee discussed the project for a subregional conference on cross-border security problems which had been adopted by the twenty-fourth ministerial meeting in Kigali in 2007.

It took note of the information provided by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs on the primary responsibility of the Department of Political Affairs in this matter and on the financial constraints which had hampered the convening of the conference owing to the lack of available resources in the trust fund.

The Committee nevertheless emphasized the scale of the cross-border security problems in Central Africa and the consequent risks the peace, security, stability and development of the countries of the subregion. It therefore decided that the conference should be organized during the next regular ministerial meeting, to be held in Yaoundé from 3 to 7 September 2007, to compensate for the lack of resources in the trust fund.

The ECCAS secretariat was authorized, through its relationship with the United Nations, to receive the funds required to cover the additional cost of organizing the conference.

VIII. Promotion of disarmament and arms limitation programmes in Central Africa

(i) Reports on the implementation of the Programme of Priority Activities for the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

The Committee took note with interest of the reports submitted by the member countries on the execution of the Programme of Priority Activities adopted at the end of the Brazzaville seminar on the implementation in Central Africa of the

United Nations Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons.

The Committee also took note of the reports submitted by the member countries on the implementation of the programmes for the disarmament, demobilization, reinsertion and full socio-economic reintegration of former combatants. It welcomed the progress made in the implementation of the programmes. It encouraged the countries concerned to continue their efforts in that area and to be guided by their respective experiences.

The Committee emphasized the importance of the prompt and full implementation of the Programme of Priority Activities adopted in Brazzaville in 2003 and urged the member countries to make the necessary efforts in this respect to establish in Central Africa a small-arms-and-nuclear-weapons-free zone.

The Committee urged the member countries to redouble their efforts in combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons at the national and subregional levels and appealed to the international community to provide the countries of the subregion with the necessary support for effectively combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

(ii) Relationship between the Programme of Priority Activities and the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region

The Committee emphasized the similarity of the concerns expressed in the Programme of Priority Activities, adopted in 2003 in Brazzaville following the seminar on the implementation in Central Africa of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, adopted on 16 December 2006 in Nairobi.

It welcomed the fact that many of the measures advocated in the Pact overlapped with those in the Programme of Priority Activities, including:

- The institution of development border basins and the promotion of human security in the region;
- The disarmament and repatriation of all the armed groups in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo;
- The disarming of armed nomadic herdsmen;
- The promotion of common policies to end the proliferation of and illicit trade in small arms and light weapons;
- Mine clearance and mine action in the region.

(iii) Participation by ECCAS in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and in the standardized instrument for reporting military expenditures

The Committee took note of the briefing by the ECCAS secretariat on the participation of member countries in the United Nations Register of Conventional Weapons and the standardized instrument for reporting military expenditures.

It deplored the fact that only eight of the countries of the subregion participated in the Register and none participated in the standardized instrument for

reporting military expenditures. It again urged them to participate in those two important instruments, which contribute to the promotion of peace, security and stability through transparency in arms flows and military expenditures.

(iv) Project for the drafting of a legal instrument on small arms and light weapons control in Central Africa

The Committee took note with interest of the briefing by the ECCAS secretariat and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs on the project for the drafting of a legal instrument on small arms and light weapons control in Central Africa.

It reaffirmed its support for the process and stressed the need to provide the region with a binding legal instrument that would take due account of the specific requirements of the member countries and their diverse concerns and experiences in this regard.

The Committee welcomed the partnership entered into by the ECCAS secretariat and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, in particular the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, and encouraged them to conclude at an early date a memorandum of understanding on cooperation between the two institutions.

The Committee expressed the hope that work on drafting the legal instrument would begin as soon as possible.

(v) Project for the drafting to a code of conduct for defence and security forces in Central Africa

The Committee took note with interest of the briefing by the ECCAS secretariat and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs on the project for the drafting of a code of conduct for defence and security forces in Central Africa specifically tailored to the geopolitical situation and security requirements of the subregion.

It stressed the importance of such an instrument, which would enhance the professionalism and sense of responsibility of the defence and security forces vis-à-vis the State and the citizenry and would build capacity in the areas of civic education, respect for human rights and international humanitarian law.

The Committee urged the two institutions to conclude a memorandum of understanding to enable work on drafting the code of conduct to proceed.

(vi) Implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) in Central Africa

The Committee took note of the briefing by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs on the implementation in Central Africa of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), adopted on 28 April 2004, which highlighted the danger of terrorism and trafficking in nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their vectors. It welcomed the participation of some of the members of the Committee in the seminar on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) in Africa, which had been held on 9 and 10 November 2006 in Accra, Ghana, with the support of the Regional Centre.

It encouraged the countries that had not participated in the Accra seminar to take an active part in the second seminar on the subject, which the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs was intending to organize in Africa in 2007.

IX. Report by the ECCAS secretariat on the institutional evolution of the subregional peace and security structures and mechanisms (strengthening of the Supreme Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX), status of the ratifications of the Protocol on COPAX, operationalization of MARAC)

The Committee took note of the report by the ECCAS secretariat on the principal ECCAS activities in the human integration, peace, security and stability sectors.

It welcomed the progress made in the institutional evolution of the subregional peace and security structures and mechanisms, in particular:

- The ongoing operationalization of the Central African Early Warning System (MARAC), with the recruitment of the officials required for starting its activities and the organization, thanks to the support of the European Union, of a seminar for training newly recruited personnel, the participants which included officials from the early warning systems of the African Union, ECOWAS, and the Conflict Settlement Centre of the University of Cape Town, South Africa;

- The establishment of the Directorate of Political and Diplomatic Actions, responsible for supporting member States in the implementation of peace and security instruments;

- The rise in importance of the ECCAS regional military staff headquarters owing to the study on the training system for military personnel in Central Africa, the organization of a seminar on the logistics of the Central African Multinational Force and the training of ECCAS forces within the framework of the SAWA 2006 exercise and the course on familiarization with equatorial forest conditions organized in Libreville in April 2007.

The Committee commended the strengthening of the ECCAS secretariat's role in the observation of elections in Central Africa, including:

- The observation in 2006 of the presidential elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe and of the legislative elections in the Gabonese Republic;

- The organization of exploratory missions in the Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Cameroon and the Republic of Angola, with a view to the observation in those countries of elections planned for 2007 and 2008;

- The preparation of an observer's guide, to be submitted for approval to the Conference of Heads of State and Government, to be held in Brazzaville in June 2007.

The Committee commended the efforts made by ECCAS in the implementation of subregional peace and security mechanisms established under the aegis of the Committee and encouraged it to continue this work.

The Committee took note of the goal which ECCAS had set for itself of bringing all its instruments to maturity by 2010, which would enable it to assume its full role in the area of peace and security.

It welcomed the dynamic cooperation between ECCAS and the various multilateral partners, including the forthcoming signature of a memorandum of understanding between the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the ECCAS secretariat, which would serve as a framework for the joint preparation of specific projects.

X. Exchange of views on methods of work and the programme of work: revitalization and stabilization activities

The members of the Committee exchanged views on the question of revitalization of the Committee's activities and rationalization of its methods of work. It commended the regular organization by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs of consultations with the Permanent Representatives of States members of the Committee to the United Nations. It also took note of the briefing delivered by Ms. Marcaillou to the Security Council on behalf of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. It welcomed those actions, which increased the Committee's visibility and gave new impetus to its work.

It considered various innovative approaches for its meetings, including the possibility of devoting a whole meeting to a specific subject that was of particular importance or urgent in character.

The Committee advocated strengthened interactions between ECCAS and other subregional organizations through the invitation of the latter, if necessary, to meetings organized under the aegis of the Committee and ECCAS, and vice versa.

The Committee welcomed the appointment of Mr. Ivor Richard Fung, Director of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, as Secretary of the Committee and assured him of its wholehearted support for his work.

The Committee expressed deep concern at the lack of available resources in the trust fund intended for the financing of extrabudgetary activities. In that regard, it appealed to members and donors to contribute to the trust fund.

XI. Date and place of the next meeting

Pursuant to the decision taken at the twenty-fourth ministerial meeting in Kigali to the effect that, in case of the withdrawal of a State, an alternative solution would be to hold the meeting in Yaoundé (A/61/502, para. 55), and in the light of the statement of the Republic of Angola not to hold the twenty-sixth meeting on the dates scheduled, the Republic of Cameroon agreed to host the twenty-sixth meeting from 3 to 7 September 2007. The Republic of Angola undertook to host the twenty-seventh meeting in February 2008.

XII. Other matters

The Committee welcomed the information provided by the delegation of the Republic of the Congo regarding the appointment of H.E. Mr. Rodolphe Adada, Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Francophonie of the Republic of the Congo, as United Nations-African Union Joint Special Representative in Darfur.

It took note with interest of the information on the briefing relating to the Committee's activities which was given by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs to the Security Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, at the request of the Republic of the Congo, Chairman of the Working Group.

XIII. Adoption of the report of the twenty-fifth ministerial meeting

The Committee adopted the present report on 18 May 2007.

The closing statement was made by H.E. Mr. Carlos Gustavo dos Anjos, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Communities.

The following expression of thanks was read out:

"We, the representatives of the States members of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, assembled for the twenty-fifth ministerial meeting held from 14 to 18 May 2007 in Sao Tome, Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe,

"Reaffirm our commitment to the ideals of peace, security and stability, deeply cherished by our respective peoples, and to the socio-economic development of our subregion;

"Commend the individual and collective efforts of our countries to achieve peace, security, stability and development;

"Welcome the atmosphere of conviviality, brotherhood and mutual trust which has prevailed throughout our work;

"Express our thanks and deep gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Fradique Bandeira Melo de Menezes, President of the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe, and to the Government and people of Sao Tome and Principe for the warm welcome and fraternal hospitality we have received during our stay in the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe."

Done at Sao Tome on 18 May 2007

United Nations A/62/97

General Assembly

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Sixty-second session
Item 51 of the preliminary list*
Culture of peace

International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General hereby transmits the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/45 of 4 December 2006.

Summary

The present report, prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/45, entitled "International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010". It follows on from the annual progress report on the Decade, also prepared by UNESCO (see A/61/175). The report presents an overview of the activities carried out by UNESCO and other United Nations entities to promote and implement the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace and contains recommendations thereon.

* A/62/50.

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I. Introduction

1. In 2006, the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) submitted the annual report of the organization on its programmes and those of other United Nations entities as regards their adherence to and implementation of the Programme of Action for the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010. In resolution 61/45, the General Assembly commended UNESCO for recognizing the promotion of a culture of peace as an expression of its fundamental mandate, and encouraged it, as lead agency for the Decade, to strengthen further the activities it had undertaken for promoting a culture of peace. By the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-second session a report on the implementation of the resolution.

II. Implementation of the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace

2. As UNESCO has been tasked with coordinating and directly implementing activities in connection with the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010, the present report contains an overview of the activities carried out by UNESCO with the participation of other United Nations entities, Governments and civil society actors. It also contains an overview of activities reported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-LiREC). Activities are presented in eight sections, corresponding to the eight actions defined in the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

A. Action to foster a culture of peace through education

3. UNESCO has been furthering its peace education activities by providing support to member States to integrate a holistic vision of quality education at all levels of their educational systems. This work includes the development of textbooks and learning materials that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, both in formal and informal learning schemes of basic education; the setting up of databases on best practice, as well as the exchange of experience; the development of scientific and technological education policies in higher education, with the overall aim of contributing to poverty reduction; the promotion of inter-university solidarity for development; and rewarding outstanding examples of activities designed to promote peace education. In 2007, training materials that provide teachers with sourcebooks on key concepts in peace education, conflict management, gender-based violence and the abolition of corporal punishment have been produced and widely disseminated. Information-sharing has been supported through the convening of expert meetings and subregional workshops to bring

together key stakeholders to examine school-related gender violence, draw up recommendations for the inclusion of peace values in education policies, discuss youth violence and violence in schools and identify good practices. Research projects have also been undertaken in collaboration with UNESCO chairs, universities and research institutes. For example, a project on integrating peace and intercultural understanding in formal and non-formal education programmes in crisis-affected countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone) was implemented in coordination with the African Development Bank and the Economic Community of West African States, in close partnership with the United Nations Development Programme and United Nations Volunteers. In addition, UNESCO, in cooperation with the Government of Botswana, supported the creation of the Centre of Studies for the Culture of Peace at the University of Botswana, which will cover Southern African countries. Other examples of projects include the Ford Foundation-sponsored studies on cultural tolerance and discrimination in education policies and practices (Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru); the evaluation of an education for peace programme in Mexico City, sponsored by UNICEF and the Ministry of Education; and research on school coexistence in Chile, carried out with the Organization of Ibero-American States and the Catholic University.

4. UNESCO is currently fostering the use of information and communication technologies, such as community radio, newspaper and the Internet, in communities and schools to promote peace education on issues related to non-violence, tolerance and mutual understanding. For example, two new educational videos that explore crime and violence issues from different angles were recently produced by UNESCO, in collaboration with the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication and the Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences at the University of the West Indies; the videos will be distributed to community media organizations in the Caribbean. UNESCO is also working to support community multimedia centres in broadcasting programmes that promote peace and non-violence, such as the ROOTS FM/ZincLink community multimedia centre in Jamaica. Over an 18-month period, the centre has engaged in a series of outside broadcasts, known as "Community Link-Up", which are designed to create an environment in which residents of inner-city communities can form alliances and friendships despite garrison political boundaries.

5. UNESCO is also developing a broadcast and Internet innovation, the Power of Peace Network, which is meant to become an independent network with a sustained global reach and presence. It is designed to support cultural self-expression through local content development; to ensure distribution, exposure and interaction; to give voice to the voiceless; and to share our diverse lives through the power of media and information tools. In parallel with content development, the initiative will launch a training programme for young producers.

6. The programmes of UNICEF reflect the need for education to promote peace and tolerance, and avoid fuelling hatred and suspicion. One particular programme that focuses on empowering young people is the UNICEF Voices of Youth programme, which gives young people from around the world an opportunity to discuss and cooperate on a range of issues related to human rights, peace education and social change. It also gives them an opportunity to participate with their peers in the Junior 8 Summit meetings, which provide the opportunity to debate the issues being discussed by the Group of Eight and come up with recommendations for the

Group's leaders. In 2006, 64 young people, 8 from each Group of Eight member country, attended the Junior 8 Summit Meeting in St. Petersburg. The young people urged the leaders of the Group to make the development and delivery of a global peace curriculum a priority issue.

7. UN-LiREC and the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean designed a project on peace, disarmament and non-proliferation education, which encompasses the development of a course for policymakers and youngsters; the exchange of experiences and lessons learned among nuclear-weapon-free zones around the world; and the preparation of audio-visual material on those zones. A video clip, entitled "Peacemaker", produced by UN-LiREC in cooperation with its partners presents a repertoire of songs interpreted by Paraguayan schoolchildren in celebration of the firearm and ammunition destruction event carried out in Paraguay in 2003, and in support of the pacific resolution of conflicts.

8. UN-LiREC and its partners also supported, for the second year in a row, an initiative aimed at complementing the celebration by Peru of its national day on 28 July with folklore and culturally inspired values. The celebration, characteristically consisting of military-style parades, used folkloric dances, sports festivals and artistic exhibitions to increase awareness of a culture of peace among the general population, in particular among the scholastic community. More than 20,000 people participated in the celebration, with 362 national educational centres, the national media, the local educational management office, and various non-governmental organizations actively involved, as was LiREC through the logistical, technical and financial support that it provided. This innovative assistance resulted in the issuance of ministerial resolution 0352-2006 which commends these alternative artistic national day celebrations and prohibits the use of toy guns or other arm replicas during the celebration of the day.

9. Within the framework of the Global Partnership Initiative for Urban Youth Development in Africa, UN-Habitat is implementing We are the Future (WAF)-One-Stop Centres in six post-conflict cities (Addis Ababa, Asmara, Freetown, Kabul, Kigali and Nablus). Viewing young people as assets for development, the initiative popularly known as WAF-One-Stop, is based on the principle of training young people (aged 15 to 24 years) living in urban areas to design and deliver youth-led activities and educational programmes for young children (aged 0 to 6+ years) and their peers. Focusing on this concept the WAF-One-Stop Centres will engage young people in developing youth-led activities and in the development of youth skills and capacity-building, while providing them with information on the WAF-One-Stop areas of emphasis (information and communication technology, health, sports and the arts). To date, UN-Habitat has undertaken scoping missions to Addis Ababa, Freetown and Kigali to engage youth and potential stakeholders in implementing the WAF-One-Stop programme.

10. ILO is working with countries, through its International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, to progressively eliminate child labour by strengthening national capacities to address the problem and by creating a worldwide movement to combat it. Child labour is not equal to violence, but many children are exposed to violence at their places of work. A recent ILO study[1]

[1] *The End of Child Labour: Within Reach* (ILO, Geneva, 2006).

estimated that 218 million girls and boys were trapped in child labour, of which 126 million were in the worst forms of child labour, which include the commercial sexual exploitation of children, pornography, trafficking, illicit activities and armed conflict. In the framework of the ILO project, activities have been undertaken in order to raise the awareness of the public of the importance of criminalizing the commercial sexual exploitation of children. As part of the ILO Global Action Plan against Child Labour, it is recommended that Governments create national plans of action for the elimination of all worst forms of child labour by 2016. Although these plans are not specific to violence against children, they encompass the combating of hazardous forms of child labour, such as sexual exploitation for commercial purposes and child trafficking, which are often intrinsically violent. ILO has also undertaken efforts to develop tools to support member States and social partners in elaborating lists of hazardous child labour, including a step-by-step document and a briefing sheet on hazardous forms of child domestic labour.

11. FAO is leading the Education for Rural People partnership (ERP), which is part of the International Alliance against Hunger and of the Education for All (EFA) initiative. Education is an essential prerequisite for reducing poverty, improving agriculture and the living conditions of rural people and building a food-secure world. ERP focuses on the need to ensure and enable an environment conducive to poverty eradication, peace and food security. Its policy focus is on engaging Governments, in collaboration with civil society in supporting investments in human resources, such as education, literacy and other skills training, which are essential elements of sustainable development. Both FAO and UNESCO are inviting member countries, international agencies and civil society to join the partnership, the main objective of which is to foster national capacities to plan and implement ERP as part of national Education for All and rural development plans. To date, there are 300 members of the partnership, including civil society organizations, Governments and international organizations. National entities such as Colombia, Kosovo and South Africa, which have been affected or are currently affected by social conflict, are all attributing great importance to ERP as a key ingredient of social cohesion and peace.

12. UNRWA has been working on eliminating all types of violence in its schools and educational institutions. This has been translated into diverse activities and programmes. For example, guidance and monitoring visits were made to UNRWA schools in Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza by senior educational specialists to discuss issues of violence and corporal punishment with several hundred teachers, students and parents. As a result, a comprehensive programme entitled "Safe and Stimulating Schools", was launched for senior and middle managers, teachers and students, with a 20-module training programme on educational, peaceful methods of interpersonal interaction. The programme represents a campaign to eliminate violent communication and corporal punishment and is being implemented in all UNRWA schools in its five areas of operation: West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon and Syrian Arab Republic. In addition, corporal punishment has been prohibited in all UNRWA schools.

B. Action to promote sustainable economic and social development

13. UNESCO is promoting dialogue and international cooperation in its areas of competence with a view to developing the foundations for a peaceful and prosperous

life for future generations. Peaceful cooperation and synergies can be advanced by focusing on water, sustainable development and human security at large. Water, with its transcultural, symbolic significance, not only has the power to unify but also to cause tension and conflict. Thus, UNESCO is working with Governments to address issues related to the prevention and resolution of water-related conflict through its "From Potential Conflict to Cooperation Potential" project. As the lead agency for the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), UNESCO emphasizes a holistic and interdisciplinary educational approach to developing the awareness, knowledge and skills needed for a sustainable future, as well as changes in values, behaviour, production and consumption patterns, and lifestyles.

14. The role of science is important for mutual cooperation and exchange among people from different cultures, traditions and religions, especially in the context of current efforts towards strengthening sustainable development. Science, as a common heritage of humanity, has always been an impetus for dialogue and understanding among scientists of different cultural and religious backgrounds. This is demonstrated through the World Association of Young Scientists, the Israeli-Palestinian Science Organization and the SESAME (Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East) programme, and through the partnership of UNESCO with DaimlerChrysler to support the Mondialogo initiative, which promotes intercultural dialogue on sustainable development issues through its school contest, engineering award and intercultural Internet portal.

15. Within the framework of the follow-up of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and the implementation of the commitments made at the youth forum held during the related International Meeting, UNESCO is working with various communities in small island developing States to promote sustainable development. Within the framework of the LINKS (Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems in a Global Society) project, UNESCO is documenting and promoting the transmission of indigenous knowledge systems and establishing intercultural dialogue on new ways to ensure that such systems are recognized and respected in regard to the contribution they can make to sustainable development. Moreover, UNESCO is collaborating with the United Nations Forum on Indigenous Issues to develop tools and methodologies that make traditional knowledge systems visible to other cultures. In this regard, the organization has been associated with over 15 cultural mapping projects with indigenous communities, to equip them with the tools needed to influence decision-making in respect of their own development.

16. Young people constitute a particular target group for dialogue efforts in general and in particular with respect to sustainable development. Within the framework of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, UNESCO and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) collaborate to foster "youthXchange", an educational project focusing on sustainable consumption for young people. Themes, such as world heritage, are promoted through projects such as the Great Volga River Route project, which promotes dialogue among Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) secondary school students from 16 countries situated along the Volga. The UNESCO Youth Forum, an integral part of sessions of the UNESCO General Conference, provides a space for young people from around the world to come together to formulate

recommendations for integration into UNESCO programmes and activities. As a follow-up to the recommendations adopted by the Fourth UNESCO Youth Forum, held during the Thirty-third General Conference in 2005, UNESCO regional forums are being organized in cooperation with national commissions and leading youth organizations on issues related to education for sustainable development and intercultural and interfaith dialogue to ensure peace.

17. UNICEF has been actively promoting the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, and has taken on the responsibility of chairing the related inter-agency committee in 2007. It has also continued to promote the Decade by working through its national committees in industrialized countries to promote education for development and to foster greater understanding of the needs of developing countries, in terms of both financial and capacity gaps.

18. UNICEF supported the participation of children and young people involved in life science projects from every region of the world in the Biovision Children's Forum, held in Lyon, France, in March 2007. The Forum afforded children and young people an opportunity to meet with prominent scientists, including Nobel laureates, and other leaders who are working on the vital life science issues facing our world today. The objective is to promote intergenerational dialogue, mutual understanding and global citizenship in areas of the life sciences, especially health, nutrition and environment.

C. Action to promote respect for all human rights

19. The specific objectives and framework for activities on human rights education are clearly laid out in the plan of action for the first phase of implementation of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. Thus, UNESCO has been providing technical assistance to member States for the development and implementation of national plans of action for human rights education in sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia and South Asia; undertaking a mapping study of human rights education in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand and Viet Nam; providing support to countries with specific needs (e.g., teacher training in Mongolia, and the development of inclusive education policies in Bangladesh and Viet Nam); designing and distributing training materials for teachers on human rights education for ASPnet and for ministries of education in francophone West African countries; publishing and distributing guidelines on integrating a human-rights based approach in education in Central Asia; organizing capacity-building subregional workshops for staff of ASPnet, UNESCO chairs, governmental officials and youth organizations, as well as school mediation workshops for teachers; promoting information exchange through the creation of a national alliance for education in human rights; and establishing partnerships with organizations such as UNICEF to design the framework for a human rights-based approach.

20. In addition to promoting the enjoyment of all human rights through education and training, UNESCO has been working to support other human rights actions related to research aimed at the elucidation of the nature and scope of the application of human rights, and the main obstacles and challenges to the realization of those rights. In addition to publishing and widely disseminating research in this area, UNESCO is also encouraging the creation of regional research and policy

networks to contribute to the development of a joint and coordinated response to regional needs and to promote human rights in policymaking. These networks bring together national human rights institutions, research centres, UNESCO chairs and the academic community in general. An example of one such network is that established in Latin America with the participation of the offices of ombudspersons in 11 countries in the region. UNESCO is also working to address the challenges associated with migration, such as human trafficking, and is encouraging multidisciplinary responses that focus on the historical, legal, political and sociocultural dimensions.

21. UNICEF is committed to applying human rights-based approaches to programming and is working with UNESCO to develop the above-mentioned framework for a human rights-based approach, which will facilitate the constitution of a network of partners for children's rights. The framework will bring together current thinking and practice on a rights-based approach in the education sector and is intended as a conceptual and programming tool that will be disseminated to countries and development partners to provide guidance on policy, planning and programme implementation in basic education. This falls within the objectives of the two agencies of achieving education for all and attaining the Millennium Development Goals of universal primary education and gender equality.

22. In an effort to set up an international dialogue on converting national budgets and fiscal policies into instruments for the realization of human rights, UNICEF hosted a conference with the theme "Eyes on the budget", which drew together delegates from other United Nations entities, member States and non-governmental organizations to discuss ways of viewing the budget as a political tool with a human rights perspective.

23. In the past 10 years, WHO has devoted substantial attention to addressing violence as a major public health problem, particularly through the Global Campaign for Violence Prevention which provides a platform for violence prevention activities that raise awareness about the problem of violence, highlight the crucial role that public health can play in addressing its causes and consequences, and encourage action at every level of society. In October 2006, WHO provided support to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in connection with the study on violence against children (see A/61/299) and the accompanying *World Report on Violence against Children*.[2] It has been working with UNICEF and others to help member States to implement the recommendations outlined in the report. In this regard, WHO and the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect launched *Preventing Child Maltreatment: A Guide to Taking Action and Generating Evidence*,[3] a tool to help Governments to design, deliver and measure the impact of programmes for the prevention of child maltreatment and its lifelong consequences and to design, implement and evaluate prevention programmes, as well as to draw attention to important considerations for detecting and responding to child maltreatment. Furthermore, violence prevention focal points have been designated in more than 100 ministries of health, and

[2] The Secretary-General's study on violence against children was a joint initiative, directly supported by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNICEF and WHO. The Report was published by the United Nations in Geneva in 2006.

[3] Published by WHO in cooperation with the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (Geneva, 2006).

18 countries have produced national reports on violence and health. To assist ministries of health in clarifying their role and responsibilities in relation to violence and injury prevention, WHO released the document *Preventing Injuries and Violence: A Guide for Ministries of Health*.[4]

24. In the area of human rights, UNRWA has designed training materials, developed curricula and textbooks, organized training of trainers and promoted the exchange of information in its five areas of operation. For example, the following materials have been produced: storybooks for students on basic human rights concepts; an e-learning CD with activities for students, teacher's guides and training packages on human rights education; a human rights magazine, to which students and school supervisors from all UNRWA areas have contributed; and a website to disseminate information on the UNRWA human rights programme.

25. The Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women drive the action taken by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to promote human rights and serve as the basis for its country-level programming. UNIFEM has sought to ensure that human rights standards and principles guide its programming and advocacy efforts. For example, UNIFEM is implementing a four-year programme (2004-2008) to strengthen the implementation of the Convention in South-East Asia. This programme is designed to facilitate the realization of women's human rights in the South-East Asian region through the more effective implementation of the Convention's provisions in seven countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.

26. UNIFEM continues its work on the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women, peace and security, in which the Council called upon all parties to armed conflict to respect international human rights and humanitarian law. In this regard, UNIFEM monitors the work of and engages with the Security Council, and provides technical expertise to Governments and civil society partners at headquarters and in the field with a view to strengthening accountability in regard to women, peace and security issues, including transitional justice, security sector reform and the various forms of gender-based violence.

D. Action to ensure equality between women and men

27. Capacity development through training for gender mainstreaming is one of the key methods to support the behaviour and organizational changes that are needed to effectively mainstream gender equality. In 2005, UNESCO launched a mandatory, house-wide capacity development and training programme in gender mainstreaming to improve its staff's understanding of gender concepts and the gender equality issue, and to ensure the integration of women's empowerment and gender equality perspectives in programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation. To date, four programme sectors have received training, as well as the staff of field offices in Latin America and Africa. Special training is being provided to staff of the UNESCO Iraq programme in Amman in order to ensure gender mainstreaming in conflict and post-conflict contexts.

[4] WHO, Geneva, 2007.

28. UNESCO supports the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) by:

(a) Increasing awareness and respect for women's human rights through the worldwide dissemination of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

(b) Using sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis to reveal how policies impact differently on women and men, but also inviting women to share their experiences;

(c) Organizing conferences and other events to promote the role of women in the area of peace and security;

(d) Forging and strengthening the political will to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment at all levels, in particular through two new initiatives: the UNESCO and Sony Ericsson Women's Tennis Association (WTA) Tour global partnership, to further gender equality and promote women's leadership in all spheres of society; and the Group of Women Ambassadors for UNESCO, to promote gender equality and women's empowerment both within the organization and in member States;

(e) Implementing projects that analyse the sociocultural institutions, laws, norms, and practices that inhibit equality through a series of studies examining family laws in the Middle East and North Africa and comparing them with international instruments;

(f) Contributing to the promotion of women's involvement in peace and security at the institutional level in post-conflict countries through the establishment of women's research and documentation centres (the first such centre was inaugurated in Palestine in January 2006; a similar centre is being established in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to serve the Great Lakes region in Africa, and a third centre has been proposed for Iraq);

(g) Promoting women's participation in scientific research through the L'Oréal-UNESCO Partnership For Women in Science.

29. Violence against women is increasingly recognized as a major global public health problem. WHO is developing a framework with other partners for the identification and costing of interventions for the prevention of violence against women that can be integrated into activities for the prevention of HIV. A consultation on addressing violence against women in HIV testing and counselling convened in 2006 resulted in a report that outlines recommendations and good practices. WHO also convenes the working group on violence against women of the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS to promote advocacy and communication activities on the intersections of violence against women and HIV/AIDS.

30. In May 2007, WHO convened an international expert meeting on primary prevention of intimate partner violence and sexual violence, with a view to furthering its work in this area. The meeting reviewed current evidence of the effectiveness of approaches for preventing new occurrences of intimate partner and sexual violence, and identified potential activities and products by which WHO could advance primary prevention globally and within countries. Over the coming year, WHO will develop both a conceptual framework to guide primary prevention

efforts and advocacy materials designed to raise the awareness of policymakers in this field.

31. UNICEF is the lead agency for the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, which supports country-led development and seeks to influence decision-making and investments as a means of ensuring gender equity and equality in national educational policies, plans and programmes. The mission of the Initiative is central to building gender equality, social justice and economic development, all of which are essential to constructing and maintaining peace in societies. The Initiative is active in the Sudan, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Eritrea, Guinea, Rwanda, Thailand and Uganda, where active United Nations peacekeeping missions and peacebuilding efforts are under way.

32. The fifty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women was devoted to the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child. To represent young people's voices at the session, UNICEF invited 18 young people from Botswana, Guatemala, Jordan, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Nepal, the Philippines, South Africa and Zambia to participate. On behalf of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) inter-agency task team on education, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and a small working group composed of members of the team (UNESCO, UNICEF, ActionAid International, Irish Aid) organized a side event for the Commission on 28 February 2007, on the theme "Girls' Education = Girl Power in the Response to HIV and AIDS", to present compelling new evidence on the link between girls' education and HIV and AIDS prevention.

33. The UNFPA Women, Peace and Security initiative focuses on following up on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). The Fund has always recognized the distinct experience of women in conflict and post-conflict settings, and not only responds to women's reproductive health needs but also makes interventions in connection with gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. In this regard, UNFPA has developed a strategy for gender mainstreaming in conflict, one of the components of which is capacity-building for non-governmental organizations to provide them with the skills needed to participate in the peacebuilding process. UNFPA conducted several national and international trainings seminars for non-governmental organizations to improve their understanding of conflict and the importance of involving women in reconstruction in the context of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

34. UNIFEM seeks to ensure equality between women and men in all of the activities carried out under its four primary areas of work (reducing feminized poverty and exclusion, promoting gender equality in democratic governance and post-conflict reconstruction, ending violence against women and halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS), bringing together Governments and civil society with United Nations and private sector partners to form effective partnerships and become agents for change. In all of its work, UNIFEM adopts an holistic approach, linking normative and legal frameworks with institutional reform to bring about change for women on the ground. This approach brings together efforts to: (a) formulate and implement laws and policies to promote gender equality and women's human rights; (b) build institutional capacity to allocate resources and establish accountability mechanisms to ensure implementation; (c) strengthen the

capacity of gender equality advocates to monitor and track progress and mobilize constituencies to bring about change; and (d) end harmful practices and attitudes that perpetuate gender inequality around the world.

35. In the field of gender equality, UNIFEM is working to provide technical assistance on gender-responsive budgeting at the national level, which is promoted as a means for Governments to address gender inequalities and exclusion through the examination and adjustment of budgeting and financial processes with a view to achieving gender equality. UNIFEM seeks to translate the lessons learned from gender-responsive budgeting in countries, such as Mozambique and Senegal to countries in situations of conflict and post-conflict. In Mozambique, the initiative is facilitating dialogue among women's organizations, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning and Development. It has also supported a participatory process for identifying priorities in respect of gender equality gaps and advocating for their inclusion in the poverty reduction strategy. In Senegal, the gender-responsive budgeting initiative established partnerships with the Poverty Reduction Strategy Monitoring Unit at the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Family and National Solidarity. Thanks to the strong mobilization of women's groups, gender advocates in the United Nations system and national partners, a number of gender indicators were agreed upon and incorporated into the national strategy document for the reduction of poverty. UNIFEM forged a partnership with the Ministry of Interior to mainstream gender equality into the reform of the decentralization code, and a study was undertaken to show the gaps in gender equality in the actual law and to propose recommendations for better integration of gender concerns in the new decentralization law.

E. Action to foster democratic participation

36. UNESCO has been promoting democratic governance and citizenship participation in developing countries, particularly those in post-conflict situations, by training journalists and media professionals in non-partisan and independent reporting techniques in conflict areas, with a focus on women journalists; supporting the establishment of the necessary conditions for independent media by providing expertise to national authorities seeking to adapt their media legislation to internationally recognized standards of freedom of expression, peace and tolerance; and assisting the media in covering elections.

37. Within the framework of the UNESCO programme on fostering standards and editorial independence in public service broadcasting, UNESCO supported the News Exchange (ERNO) project to reinforce the cooperation of public broadcasters in South-Eastern Europe region with a view to improving the professionalism of television news staff and to improving the quality of news stories. The objective of ERNO is to strengthen democracy and peace in South-Eastern Europe via public television. In Portuguese-speaking countries, UNESCO is supporting the creation of a television content exchange platform among public service broadcasters as a means of strengthening existing cooperation and increasing their technical capacity.

38. In June 2006, the UNICEF Executive Board adopted a post-crisis transition strategy to support the organization's medium-term strategic plan, which emphasizes that young people must actively participate in the post-crisis transition process. To support the operationalization of the strategy, the UNICEF Adolescent Development

and Participation Unit and the Transition Unit at UNICEF headquarters have developed a standard survey tool specifically for young people in post-crisis transitional contexts, which aims at assessing the needs, concerns and constructive potential of young people in transitional contexts in informing and influencing national advocacy and development plans more effectively. The plan is to integrate this tool, partially or in full, in the existing assessment and planning approaches currently used by international and national organizations in post-crisis transitional contexts. To further encourage young people's civic participation, the UNICEF East Asia Regional Office organized in Bangkok a meeting on children and young people's civic participation and citizenship with the aim of reaching agreement on key messages and concrete proposals in that regard. The messages were addressed to Governments in the region and were included in the official declaration of the Eighth East Asia and Pacific Ministerial Consultation on Children, held in Nadi, Fiji, in May 2007.

39. UNIFEM has supported women's participation in decision-making at all levels and the promotion of accountability for women's rights and gender equality in the institutions (and processes) related to conflict resolution, peacebuilding and governance. In this context, UNIFEM has used its comparative advantage to play a convening and brokering role and to build new partnerships, as well as to support women's rights movements and organizations. In addition, it has strengthened women's organizations through the establishment of safe spaces for women's capacity-building and strategy-building.

40. In the context of the UNIFEM Gender and Governance Programme, UNICEF hosted a national conference for parliamentary aspirants in Nairobi in May 2007. For the first time in Kenyan history, a gathering of more than 300 women parliamentary aspirants and incumbents from diverse backgrounds, party affiliations and constituencies from all over the country discussed strategies on how to push for a critical mass of women to be elected to parliament.

41. UNIFEM has embarked on a two-year initiative to support women in their communities in building peace and preventing sexual violence during and after conflict. The programme, entitled "Supporting women's engagement in peacebuilding and preventing sexual violence in conflict: community-led approaches", was launched during a workshop held in Lira, Uganda, in April 2007, and is funded through a US$ 6.5 million grant from the Department for International Development, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The initiative will focus on six countries in conflict and post-conflict situations: Afghanistan, Haiti, Liberia, Rwanda, Timor-Leste and Uganda. These countries represent a wide range of conflict and post-conflict contexts, with unique opportunities and challenges. Partnerships and strategies will target multiple levels of engagement, from women's inclusion in formal peace processes to co-policing strategies in neighbourhoods, work with customary or traditional authorities, and support for services for survivors.

F. Action to advance understanding, tolerance and solidarity

42. In order to advance the work of UNESCO to promote dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, the UNESCO Executive Board, at its 174th and 175th sessions, adopted an action plan to foster better reciprocal knowledge and

understanding of cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity. Five major themes were identified for UNESCO: promoting reciprocal knowledge of cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity; building a framework for commonly shared values; strengthening quality and values education; countering violence and extremism; and fostering dialogue for sustainable development. The organization is working to implement the action plan by bringing together experts and practitioners to discuss the concept, practice and challenges related to intercultural and inter-faith dialogue. Examples include:

(a) A seminar on the theme "Intercultural dialogue and its new stakes", held in June 2006, which brought together musicians, archaeologists, historians, sociologists, writers and specialists in urban planning to analyse current debates regarding intercultural dialogue and the role of the city as a space for dialogue and diversity;

(b) An international seminar on the theme "Dialogue of cultures and civilizations: bridge between human rights and moral values", organized at UNESCO headquarters in March 2007 by the World Public Forum — Dialogue of Civilizations;

(c) An expert meeting on mainstreaming the principles of intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity in development, held at UNESCO headquarters in May 2007, to translate the principles of cultural diversity and dialogue into policy proposals, with a particular focus on education.

43. Declarations and final communiqués adopted at the various meetings highlight the need to strengthen the educational and pedagogical aspects of intercultural and interreligious dialogue. UNESCO has therefore devoted considerable attention to the important role that education and media play in changing mindsets and behavioural patterns. Recent initiatives include the campaign entitled "Breaking the silence", launched jointly by the Slave Route Project and ASPnet, the revision of school textbooks in order to reduce stereotyping and discrimination (Slave Route Project and Mediterranean Programme), the production of pedagogical tools to promote reciprocal knowledge among different religious communities (Interreligious Dialogue Programme) and, finally, stimulating intercultural understanding through the UNESCO network of chairs of interreligious dialogue for intercultural understanding.

44. Since intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity are inseparable and mutually dependant, the organization has been promoting cultural diversity by assisting member States in bolstering national cultural heritage legislation, policy and practices; working to protect, rehabilitate and safeguard heritage through advocacy, capacity-building and standard-setting; and developing sustainable cultural industries. Internationally, 2006 was marked by the entry into force of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, thus providing legal protection for the living cultural heritage.

45. UNICEF is working to promote peace and tolerance in Chechnya through the organization of summer camps for 1,000 children and young people and the training of 300 educators; providing support to mobile trainers groups to reach 20,000 schoolchildren and teachers; helping to finalize, publish and distribute a peace and tolerance encyclopaedia; revising a peace and tolerance manual for teachers and trainers of non-governmental organizations, and distributing it to 200 specialists;

supporting the Children's Peace Theatre; supporting the organization of a network of clubs of volunteers to reach 10,000 children and adolescents; and organizing a conference for 200 experts and pedagogues to share experiences in regard to peace and tolerance.

G. Action to support participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge

46. UNESCO continued to assist the development of an environment enabling free press in more than one dozen post-conflict areas and countries in transition (e.g., Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Balkan countries, Liberia, Nepal, Iraq, Somalia, the Sudan and Rwanda). In Nepal, UNESCO provided technical assistance in developing the freedom of expression principle in the phase which led to the comprehensive peace agreement. The principle was integrated into that agreement. In Somalia, a project on an international programme for the development of communication facilitated the creation of the Somali Forum for Freedom of Expression, which gathers together the National Union of Somali Journalists and another 40 civil society and human rights groups from all over the country. Iraqi journalists, members of parliament and governmental officials reached an unprecedented agreement on measures to protect and promote free and pluralistic media in Iraq during a major international conference held at UNESCO headquarters in January 2007. Regarding Israel and Palestine, a first pilot peace journalism training workshop was organized in Switzerland in 2006, under the sponsorship of UNESCO and the Lassale Institute. Veteran journalists from both sides joined in the training by two peace journalism coaches from Europe, and they elaborated 10 practical steps to improve the quality of journalism, diminish concepts of the enemy and discuss solutions.

47. UNESCO is working to reduce the digital divide and to provide universal access to information and knowledge through the Information for All programme. Within the context of the programme, the organization assisted member States in developing legal and policy frameworks that promote universal access to information. Action was also targeted at implementing the outcomes of the two phases of the World Summit on the Information Society. At the local level, UNESCO has been providing a gateway to participation in the global knowledge society, especially for women and young people, seeking to ensure, through its Community Multimedia Centre programme, that information, communication and knowledge become tools for the poor to improve their lives. UNESCO has supported over 50 community multimedia centres, including those in Angola, the Great Lakes region, the Middle East, Timor-Leste and Afghanistan, thereby contributing to peacebuilding and reconciliation.

H. Action to promote international peace and security

48. UNICEF undertakes some form of mine-related actions in more than 30 countries. In Chechnya, work focused on working with schools, the mass media, teachers, counsellors and specialists on mine-risk education; developing safe youth leisure centres to provide a safe and child-friendly environment each day for about

700 children who have lost limbs; providing prosthetics to about 250 children who have lost limbs and helping them to access proper medical care; and supporting the work of the child ombudspersons' offices which are working to monitor and protect children's rights.

49. In an historic agreement between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and UNICEF, fighting was suspended and aid workers were able to conduct a "Days of Peace" campaign in conflict areas in the Philippines in order to bring immunization and other essential health services to families in 700 remote villages — services that previously have not reached them owing to the ongoing conflict in the southern Philippines.

50. To promote international peace and security by furthering efforts to engage multi-stakeholders in dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, UNESCO consulted a range of current and potential partners and organizations with a view to building a broad-based and inclusive approach and identifying possibilities for joint action and partnerships. In this context, UNESCO has pledged to promote dialogue among political leaders in countries of South-Eastern Europe as they work to create a common vision of the future that is based on international cooperation. UNESCO assisted with the organization of a series of regional meetings in Ohrid, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2003), Tirana (2004), Varna, Bulgaria (2005), Opatija, Croatia (2006) and Bucharest (June 2007). At the recent summit meeting in Bucharest, Heads of State and other leaders from South-Eastern Europe committed themselves to fostering in-depth cooperation in the field of culture among the countries in the region, by backing up the measures needed for protecting and promoting cultural diversity in order to properly develop integrated and international projects and duly handle the conceptual and operational strategies within the domain of inventory, preservation and enhancement of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

51. At the regional level, efforts were made to promote regional integration in Africa, through the participation of UNESCO in the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (Khartoum, January 2006). At that session, which was devoted to education and culture, a cooperative agreement was signed between UNESCO and the African Union, outlining joint areas of cooperation between the two entities.

52. In accordance with the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations and the related Programme of Action, and in cooperation with the Alliance of Civilizations, UNESCO will continue to explore innovative inter-agency engagements and initiatives with partners at all levels, including action related to reinforcing inter-faith dialogue. At the policy level, the organization has made particular efforts to enhance its cooperation with the Alliance of Civilizations. The Director-General of UNESCO participated in the two most recent meetings of the High-level Group established by the Alliance, in which he shared the approach and experience of UNESCO in regard to dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples. The organization is working to align its work[5] with the recommendations

[5] A list of UNESCO conferences and publications concerning dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples is available at http://portal.unesco.org/unesco/ev.php?URL_ID=37085&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201&reload=1176729915.

put forward in the report of the High-level Group,[6] submitted to the General Assembly in November 2006.

53. UNESCO also participates in, and contributes to, the development of the Secretary-General's counter-terrorism strategy within the framework of the inter-agency counter-terrorism task force. This task force was established following the adoption of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1). In its resolution 60/288, on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the General Assembly designated a key role for UNESCO in the Plan of Action annexed thereto, which referred to the promotion of dialogue and the prevention of the defamation of religious beliefs, as well as to the promotion of a culture of peace, justice and human development through inter-faith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations. As a follow-up to the adopted strategy, UNESCO assisted the task force with the development of a counter-terrorism online handbook, which will be an important tool that allows Member States, United Nations staff and accredited regional and subregional organizations to access United Nations counter-terrorism resources and identify relevant contact points. UNESCO also participated in the symposium on advancing the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, convened in Vienna in May 2007 to generate the global action required to raise awareness of the Strategy and promote its implementation, and to identify measures to assist member States in that endeavour.

III. Role of civil society

54. UNESCO is encouraging civil society to strengthen its efforts to promote a culture of peace. In 2006, on the International Day of Peace, UNESCO organized the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education Award Ceremony and the round-table meeting on the theme "Culture of peace today" to recognize both the Sri Lankan Judge Christopher Gregory Weeramantry for his work in support of the concept and culture of peace and the Fundación para la Reconciliación which received a special mention award.

55. The culture of peace was also promoted with youth-focused non-governmental organizations (260 young people shared their messages and objects of peace at UNESCO headquarters in December 2006 during the Light of Bethlehem event organized in collaboration with associations of the World Scout Movement) and with the UNESCO Centre in Turin, Italy (30 young people presented their projects at UNESCO headquarters in November 2006). UNESCO also joined with the Goi-Peace Foundation to support the 2007 International Essay Contest for Young People on the theme "The role of media and information and communication technologies in building a peaceful world".

56. The contribution of women to the peacebuilding process was highlighted on International Women's Day during an international high-level round-table meeting on "Women peacemakers" organized at UNESCO headquarters, which brought together outstanding women who work in favour of peace. Following the debate, the panellists signed a statement by women peacemakers, calling for the continued commitment of UNESCO to support and promote the full participation of women in

[6] *Alliance of Civilizations: Report of the High-level Group, 13 November 2006* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.1.11).

peace processes, which was forwarded to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.[7]

IV. Communication and networking arrangements

57. UNESCO continued to collect and disseminate information on contributions to the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010) through the culture of peace website established during the International Year for the Culture of Peace (2000), which serves as a rallying point for Decade activities and as a resource centre, with tools that enable better promotion of the culture of peace.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

58. **United Nations agencies, funds and programmes are encouraged to continue focusing their programmes on the various dimensions of the culture of peace, especially at the country level.**

59. **Member States for their part are encouraged to:**

(a) **Observe 21 September, the International Day of Peace, as a day of global ceasefire and non-violence, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/282;**

(b) **Implement the recommendations contained in the report of the High-level Group on the Alliance of Civilizations;**[6]

(c) **Increase educational efforts to develop curricula, textbooks and activities that teach cultural and religious tolerance;**

(d) **Ensure the access of marginalized communities to communication and information technologies to ensure the free flow of ideas so that all cultures and peoples have the ability to express themselves and to make themselves known;**

(e) **Urge the media, at the international and national levels, to support the global campaign for a culture of peace as well as dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples.**

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[7] The text of the statement is available at http://portal.unesco.org/unesco/ev.php?URL_ID=37807&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201&reload=1179485045.

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Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 3 of its resolution 61/54, on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, the General Assembly invited all Member States to continue to inform the Secretary-General of their views and assessments on the following questions: (a) general appreciation of the issues of information security; (b) efforts taken at the national level to strengthen information security and promote international cooperation in this field; (c) the content of relevant international concepts aimed at strengthening the security of global information and telecommunications systems; and (d) possible measures that could be taken by the international community to strengthen information security at the global level.

2. On 23 February 2007, a note verbale was sent to Member States inviting them to inform the Secretary-General of their views and assessments on the subject. The replies received are contained in section II below. Additional replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Brunei Darussalam

[Original: English]
[25 June 2007]

Brunei Darussalam submitted the following report from the Royal Brunei Police Force.

1. Introduction

(General appreciation of the issues of information security)

1. Information technology, encompassing all developments in the field of information and telecommunications, has come to play a vital role in all sectors of society. Information technologies are transforming the ways we create, gather, process, manage and share information. Electronic transactions and records are the mainstream and are central to everything from commerce to health care. Computer networking is driving these changes. The exponential growth of both the Internet and the number of users each year exemplifies this transition to a networked society.

2. As a consequence, information security has become an essential component of information technology, especially in the context of the information society. However, it is a complex subject, and the appropriate measures will often depend, to a large extent, on the type and location of the information technology equipment and its infrastructure.

3. Computer networking is driving many of these changes. These transformations also raise new concerns for the security and privacy of networked information. If these concerns are not properly resolved, they threaten to limit the full potential of networking, in terms of both participation and usefulness. Thus, appropriate institutional and technological safeguards are required for a broad range of personal, copyrighted, sensitive or proprietary information.

4. The potential security threats and risks will have to be carefully assessed in every situation, and it is absolutely vital that all concerned are made aware of the threats and risks that affect them and over which they have control. Only then will they fully understand and apply the appropriate security procedures.

5. The focus will be on safeguarding unclassified information in networks, on the security or survivability of networks and on the reliability of network services to ensure information access.

6. There are three main areas to look into: (a) cryptography policy, including governmental information processing standards and controls; (b) guidance on safeguarding unclassified information in governmental agencies; and (c) legal issues and information security, including electronic commerce, privacy and intellectual property.

7. Information safeguards, especially those based on cryptography, are becomingly increasingly important. Appropriate safeguards (countermeasures) must account for and anticipate technical, institutional and social changes that increasingly shift responsibility for safeguarding information to the end users. Broader efforts to safeguard networked information will be frustrated unless cryptography policy issues are resolved. The single most important step towards implementing proper safeguards for networked information in a governmental agency or other organization is for top management to define the overall objectives of the organization, formulate an organizational security policy to reflect those objectives and implement that policy. Only top management can consolidate the consensus and apply the resources necessary to effectively protect networked information.

8. This view attempts to assess the threats and risks posed by criminal activity in information technology environments and to indicate advice that the police can give about security procedures and computer crime prevention methods. Threats to information systems may arise from intentional and unintentional acts and may come from both internal and external sources.

II. Concerns

9. The Royal Brunei Police Force is concerned about the lack of coverage for security preparation in the context of national development of e-Government initiatives.

10. So far, the Royal Brunei Police Force has not been called upon or become involved in national preparations to move into the information age. For the last three years, much legislation has been adopted to prepare the country for the information age. And many governmental and regulatory bodies have been or are being set up to spearhead the e-Government initiatives.

11. Security in terms of law enforcement preparation has been neither actively pursued nor given the same priority as other items on the national agenda. The Royal Brunei Police Force is of the opinion that security plays a very important role in national aspirations to join the information society.

12. Security is crucial for the information age. The importance of putting in a secure and reliable infrastructure cannot be overstressed.

III. Royal Brunei Police Force initiatives

(Efforts taken at the national level to strengthen information security and promote international cooperation in this field)

13. Because the Royal Brunei Police Force is the leading law enforcement agency in the country, it wishes to provide assistance in spearheading the security aspects required to enter fully into the Information Age.

14. To this end, many officers have been sent overseas to train on Internet-related crimes, especially cybercrimes and transnational crimes. Initially, due to lack of funding, no further advances in procuring the required information technology equipment and software for investigating breaches in computer systems were realized. At present, the Royal Brunei Police Force has the capability to initiate investigations into cybercrime cases.

15. The Royal Brunei Police Force has taken steps to further international cooperation in this field by actively participating in various forums on enhancing law enforcement capabilities. The Royal Brunei Police Force has connections to regional and international law enforcement computer networks, which furthers its capability to pursue fugitives.

IV. Royal Brunei Police Force proposals and recommendations

(Possible measures that could be taken by the international community to strengthen the information community and information security at the global level)

16. The Royal Brunei Police Force presents the following as starting points for facilitating and improving security in the context of information security.

(a) Reporting and monitoring threats and vulnerabilities:

(1) Since Brunei Darussalam Computer Emergency Response Team was formed in 2004, there has been some form of control. However, this control is not complete, as BruCert is not linked in any way to the Royal Brunei Police Force and there is no mechanism to activate a fast response; e.g., monitoring or intercepting a live intrusion, etc.

(b) Education and security mechanisms for safe computing:

(1) Support for the development of educational materials and programmes about cyberspace for all users. This will provide early training in Internet security practices and behaviour.

(2) Investment in awareness campaigns that stress the need for security training for system administrators, network managers and chief information officers;

(3) Facilitation of the development and deployment of security mechanisms for information in cyberspace, mechanisms that allow each party to a transaction to decide what precautions and limitations they want.

(c) Research and development:

(1) Allocation of funds for research and development in the areas of security and survivability for unbounded systems architectures with distributed control;

(2) Development of comprehensive toolkits that support the efforts of network administrators to operate secure systems;

(3) Development of techniques for comprehensive, continuous risk identification and mitigation programmes.

(d) Use of standards:

(1) Establish and encourage acceptance of software security standards as a short-term method to jump-start the process of improving security in Internet products;

(2) Create a Government policy that Government-purchased computer equipment and software must meet specified security standards that include a requirement for a security alert service that notifies the customer of vulnerabilities and repairs.

(e) Laws and law enforcement:

(1) Support our cybercops and allocate appropriate funding to law enforcement agencies to support the training, physical resources and staff necessary to handle the cybercrimes reported;

(2) Ensure that national policy reflects the needs of law enforcement to coordinate internationally to solve crimes in cyberspace and support law enforcement in forming international hot pursuit agreements;

(3) Ensure that public policy facilitates the widespread use of encryption to protect information and users of cyberspace.

Burkina Faso

[Original: French]
[20 June 2007]

1. Burkina Faso gave expression very early on to its political will to develop the new information and communication technologies, which it considers to be a strategic tool for strengthening good governance and bringing about economic and social development.

2. As early as 1996, it undertook a wide-ranging review of the development of the new information and communication technologies, with a view to using those technologies to modernize public services and improve the effectiveness of Government actions.

3. In 1999, it drew up a plan for a national information and communication infrastructure, covering the period 2001-2005. The plan seeks to promote convergence of national polices in the sphere of telecommunications, computer technology and communication media.

4. In 2004, the Government of Burkina Faso adopted a strategy for putting the development plan for the national information and communication infrastructure into operation. With this plan, the Government undertook to guarantee that information and communication technologies would be disseminated throughout society, would be accessible to and owned by all social strata and that their potential would be mobilized for the benefit of national development strategies.

5. But, mindful of the risks arising out of the use of information systems, the Government is striving to create a legal framework directed towards protecting information, making information systems secure, protecting people's fundamental rights, and gaining the trust of business and administration.

6. Accordingly, it adopted Law No. 010-2004/AN of 20 April 2004, which provides for the protection of personal data. This law protects the fundamental rights and liberties of individuals, and their privacy within the context of the processing by computer or by other means of information containing data of a personal nature. Pursuant to this law, decree 2007-283/PRES/PM/MPDH of 18 May 2007 established a commission on information technology and freedoms. This commission is an independent administrative authority with the task of ensuring that the automated processing of personal data, whether by government or private bodies, is carried out in conformity with the law. Being empowered to both regulate and impose penalties, it can act both upstream and downstream issuing opinions and statements before the fact and monitoring activities and imposing penalties.

7. Finally, regulatory bodies have been established to meet the security needs of the information society. One is the Higher Council on Information, under the directorate-general responsible for coordinating development programmes for information and communication technologies, part of the Ministry of Postal Services and Information and Telecommunications Technologies.

8. However, given that the information society does not recognize national boundaries, Burkina Faso takes the view that international cooperation is fundamental in order to render information systems secure. Although, on the other side of the digital divide, in terms of security, the countries of the South are as exposed, as the countries of the North. Collaboration between countries is therefore essential to ensure the security of States, institutions, companies and individuals and of information networks and systems. The only way to combat cybercrime effectively is by enhancing international cooperation.

9. Burkina Faso is pleased to note that the United Nations is interested in the question of information security, and believes that now is the time to draw up an international instrument on security of information technology on the one hand and protection of personal data on the other. In any event, the progress being made in information technology, including telematics, together with the questions of international security, will have to be examined from the point of view of human rights to ensure that the world does not become a society under surveillance, dominated by the dehumanizing reactions of the entire security apparatus.

Chile

[Original: Spanish]
[13 June 2007]

1. Chile attaches great important to information security in the context of international security. We share the global concern at the possibility that information technology can potentially be used for purposes that are inconsistent with the objective of maintaining international stability and security and may adversely affect the infrastructure of States. We believe that it is necessary to prevent information technology from being used for criminal purposes.

2. In the legislative sphere, progress has been made in adopting a number of laws and regulations with respect to the security and confidentiality of electronic documents and the efficient transmission of documents between State administrative organs and between them and the citizens.

3. Because of the importance of this topic, Chile participated actively in the two phases of the World Summit on the Information Society which were held in Geneva, in December 2003, and in Tunis, in November 2005.

China

[Original: Chinese]
[15 May 2007]

1. The rapid development and broad application of information technology are currently playing a positive role in promoting economic and social development and in improving people's lives in countries throughout the world. At the same time, information security has become a major factor influencing the general security of individual countries and even the security and stability of the world as a whole. The appropriate resolution of this issue in accordance with the collective benefit of all countries is a shared responsibility of the international community.

2. It is the view of China that the issue of information security involves not only the risks arising from the weakness and interconnected nature of the basic information infrastructure, but also the political, economic, military, social, cultural and numerous other types of problems created by the misuse of information technology. Both of these factors are worthy of concern when studying the issue of information security.

3. China holds that information technology should be used in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the basic principles of international relations; the free flow of information should be guaranteed under the premises that national sovereignty and security must be safeguarded and that the historical, cultural and political differences among countries be respected; each country has the right to manage its own cyberspace in accordance with its domestic legislation; and in view of the imbalances among countries in the development of telecommunications, the international community should also strengthen cooperation in the research and application of information technology and conscientiously ensure the freedom of information technology for all countries.

4. The Chinese Government has always attached great importance to the question of information technology. It has drawn up and progressively implemented a national information-security strategy, and formulated a series of information-security laws, regulations and standards. A great deal of work has been done to strengthen network security monitoring, improve coordination and handling mechanisms, develop research on network-security technology, and construct network-security emergency response systems. Capabilities for protecting the security of basic information networks and important information systems are continuously growing stronger.

5. China actively participates in international cooperation in the field of information security. In June 2006, the heads of the member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization signed the "Statement of the Heads of the member States

of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on international information security", in which it was decided to establish a group of experts on international information security. China has constructively participated in the work of that group.

6. China holds that the United Nations is the appropriate setting in which to explore the issue of information security. From 2004 to 2005, a group of Governmental experts engaged in discussions and offered numerous valuable proposals with regard to a range of topics in the field of information security, thereby laying a solid foundation for the continued exploration of information-security issues by the international community. China supports the re-convening by the United Nations in 2009 of a Governmental experts group to carry out a deep and comprehensive study of the threats and challenges in the field of information security along with effective programmes and policies to address them. China will continue, as it has in the past, to support and participate in international efforts to deal with the problem of information security.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[16 May 2007]

1. The outcome that Cuba has achieved at this time in respect of information and communication technologies is highly social in character, devoid of any consumerism, and is training a new type of specialist, totally committed and with ethical values that are unrelated to the models promoted by the globalized neoliberal world.

2. The substantial improvement in technological infrastructure and the massive and thorough preparation of human capital from an early age are examples of the enormous efforts being made by the Cuban State to move swiftly towards a computer literate society as a means of improving the country's quality of life, efficiency and competitiveness.

3. Based on this policy, Cuba has organized a rational and efficient use of computer resources, as regards both equipment and connectivity, in a massive social form. Priority is given to key areas such as health, education, scientific centres, cultural institutions and businesses, that ensure the nation's economic and social development.

4. However, this development has come up against a cruel and prolonged economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America, which has been tightened under the present administration.

5. Cuba's Internet connection dates back to 1996 when the United States Government granted Cuba a licence for such access. At present, however, even though international fibre-optic cables pass very close to the coast of Cuba, this blockade has prevented Cuba from connecting to them and, as a result, the country is compelled to use a satellite channel with an outgoing bandwidth of a mere 65 Mbps and an incoming bandwidth of 124 Mbps. Fibre-optic connection would not only permit faster Internet connection but would also result in significant cost reductions. The laws state that, prior to any addition to or modification of the channel, a licence must be obtained from the United States Department of the Treasury.

6. As regards technological infrastructure, the United States blockade not only prevents us from acquiring computer equipment and programmes from United States companies but, because of its extraterritorial nature, it also affects our commercial operations with the firms of other countries; downloading of software and data — including the data — is blocked if the Internet Protocol (IP) number is identified as being Cuban.

7. Given that the Internet is a global common area there certainly are challenges that need to be overcome, not only relating to its governability by all mankind and the consequent inclusion of all countries in its administration but also relating to the eradication of scourges that are universally condemned, such as dissemination of pornography, incitement to terrorism, racism, fraud, dissemination of fascist ideologies and all forms of cybercrime.

8. Another major challenge — about which the rich countries are silent — is the need to do away with the selective and elitist nature of the Internet; currently, the inequalities and barriers that exist in the real world, are being transferred into cyberspace, resulting in what is known as the digital divide.

9. There are millions of people throughout the world who are nowhere near to becoming "internauts" given that they cannot even read or write and that their main daily concern is dealing with hunger, thirst and disease. With political will on the part of Governments, international cooperation and a modicum of the resources that the so-called developed world currently lavishes on advertising, overconsumption and the arms race, the Internet could become a vehicle for bringing about a cultural and educational revolution that would promote knowledge, foster education, culture, cooperation, solidarity and the ethical and moral values so necessary in this new century, as well as safeguarding humanity's nobler feelings and casting aside inhuman, selfish and individualist behaviours.

10. Moreover, security agencies have paid special attention to the topic and most use these technologies to assist the Government. By investing huge amounts of funds they have developed a variety of means and programmes to strengthen existing technologies or create new ways to intercept communications, access databases and systems and create systems for identifying and monitoring vehicles and individuals. These complex networks are made up of antenna systems, listening stations, radars and satellites, supported by submarines and spy planes, all linked to supercomputers and specialized applications.

11. It would be very naive to believe that, in collaborating with said agencies, the companies that supply services and technologies, do not provide them with information to help them with their intelligence-gathering and spying. After all, according to the provisions of the United States Patriot Act, the Government is authorized to demand information — regardless of whether or not it is confidential — from any firm, if it considers such information to be relevant to national security.

12. Given that knowledge is the heritage of mankind as a whole, it is essential to democratize the presence and distribution of the capital that information represents; the latter should be used for the purpose of promoting peace and development, since these are essential for continued progress in the new millennium.

Lebanon

The following letters were received from the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations representing communications between the Mission and Lebanon's Ministries of Telecommunications, Interior and Defense.

Ministry of Telecommunications

[Original: English]
[4 June 2007]

1. We are issuing a new law covering the information and communications technology sector in Lebanon, which is in the final approval phase by the Chamber of Deputies. This law shall cover security and all matters related to information crimes.

2. Once the law mentioned above enters into force, the Ministry of Telecommunications will arrange the matters concerning points b, c and d with other ministries and all administrators concerned.

Ministry of Interior

[Original: Arabic]
[23 May 2007]

1. At the national level, information is exchanged between the various Internal Security Forces units by means of wire (telephone and facsimile) and wireless communications (such as operations rooms in various locations), although these methods remain vulnerable to violation and interception by eavesdropping. It should be recalled that, some time ago, the Directorate-General started to expand the TETRA communications network adopted by the Internal Security Forces by using it in certain parts of Lebanon prior to being deployed throughout the country. Moreover, the Security Forces were recently supplied with a network of locked cellular lines, in accordance with Council of Ministers decision No. 47 of 15 September 2006.

2. At the international level, information and, in particular, security information, is exchanged between the Internal Security Forces and other international organizations through the International Communications Division within the Directorate-General of the Internal Security Forces, which has a station for the transmission and reception of security information through the Beirut International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) office within the Division, which at present uses a regular communications system based on Internet technology and characterized by rapid information exchange. Confidentiality is safeguarded through specialized networks, maintained in conjunction with Interpol, which is responsible for overseeing the administration of the network and updating it.

3. • With regard to subparagraph (a) relating to the general appreciation of the issues of information security, the Internal Security Forces strive to use effective technical means with regard to wire and wireless information and communications security and encounter numerous challenges in so doing, the main one being the standardization of the information security and data protection structure on the basis of appropriate and satisfactory criteria in

order to establish, implement and document the management of information security systems, as well as measures for the regulation of such systems.

- With regard to subparagraphs (b) and (c) relating to efforts to strengthen and enhance information security at the national level and international participation in this sphere, we have had practical and realistic experience in evaluating intrusion risks, based on the condition of the information network. We have made progress in improving the security of our information network, using modern techniques and the solutions and procedures established for systems protection and evaluation of the immunity of systems to intrusion, interference and viruses, as well as in establishing plans that would prevent the disruption of work should systems come under attack and in training competent personnel capable of dealing with emergencies efficiently.

- With regard to subparagraph (d) on possible measures that could be taken by the international community in order to strengthen information security at the global level, we propose first of all to adopt a preventive policy in order to stop individual acts of intrusion and cooperate at the international level to that end. Following that, we propose to draft a law on combating acts of sabotage against and intrusion into information networks and to consider such acts as crimes punishable by law, and, lastly, to exchange experiences with Member States and benefit from their experiences in order to achieve significant qualitative progress in this sphere.

In this regard, it should be noted that the Directorate-General has taken the following steps:

(a) The Directorate-General established an office within the Internal Security Forces dedicated to combating information crime. The principal tasks of the office include reporting information crimes and risks to digital information security, in addition to investigating and prosecuting the perpetrators of such crimes.

(b) A number of specialized officers from the Security Forces participated in the preparation by the Parliamentary Committee on Technology of a draft law on combating information crime. The draft law is now awaiting approval by Parliament.

(c) The Security Forces participate actively in Interpol activities and contribute to the operations of its Regional Working Party on Information Technology Crime — Middle East and North Africa, of which the Vice-Chairperson and one member are Internal Security Forces officers specialized in information technology. Furthermore, the Chief of the Office on Combating Information Crime liaises with Interpol on issues relating to information security and combating information crime, in particular as regards information security.

In view of the threats to security in general, at both national and international levels, and to information and communications systems in particular, a forward-looking strategy needs to be established that takes into consideration technical progress in order to protect information and find means of responding to any violations. In this regard, the following points should be noted:

1. *Information speed and security criteria*

The means whereby information is transferred and stored have advanced with considerable speed due to technological developments, but the difficulties involved in monitoring systems, instruments and content have made it necessary to impose protection measures at all levels. International information security management standards have been established in ISO 17799.

2. *Lebanon and information security*

Lebanon lacks numerous measures at the legislative and executive levels that would ensure a secure information environment. No legislation or administrative measure obliging government departments and institutions to apply information security management standards (ISO 17799) exists, although some directives similar to international standards are applied at present by the Banque du Liban and some private banks. Moreover, no legislation exists on the basic principles of the encryption of private communications networks.

The issue of implementation

Ministry of Telecommunications Circular No. 4/2 of 19 December 2005 concerning keeping files on information traffic is not respected. No legislation exists to regulate Internet cafes, and the monitoring of communications via satellite in Lebanese airspace is ineffectual.

In this regard, it should be noted that, following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the United States of America established the Department of Homeland Security and adopted a nationwide monitoring system for all communications networks, in order to ensure analysis and surveillance. Moreover, strict legislation on data encryption and network access was established.

3. *Means of combating and preventing information crime*

Cyberspace, as a network using the Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) communications protocol, has shown itself to be a fragile and insecure environment which has allowed criminal groups to attack and, on occasion, destroy it, because priority has been given to commercial and marketing objectives. Moreover, cybercrimes are distinguished by speed and the absence of controls or limits, while means of combating them are slow, coordination non-existent and the legislation adopted inadequate.

Numerous improvements have been made to the functioning of Internet protocols both with regard to users and encryption, including the IPv6 protocol. Serious research has continued into security techniques for information networks capable of shielding them from intrusion and destruction.

International agreements on combating cybercrime, in particular the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, provide for rapid cooperation between States and have led to:

- The establishment of a 24/7 communications network parallel to the Interpol network, specialized in information crime;

– The formation of a steering committee and party regional working subcommittees to encourage technical cooperation and, also, update and enhance the skills of the offices engaged in combating information crime.

However, it appears that the Budapest Convention has not been able to guarantee a rapid and immediate response to viruses that could be released onto the network.

Proposals

- Enhance the effectiveness and improve legislation on information security and, consequently, the application of information security protection standards.
- Enhance the effectiveness and improve security efforts in all security services, in order to protect information systems and means.
- Enhance the effectiveness and improve the specialized machineries within the Ministry of Telecommunications and ensure that they interact with the security services and public and private institutions, in order to create a secure environment for information systems.
- Keep abreast of new developments, in particular with regard to the implementation of Internet protocols such as IPv6, adopt the technical means necessary for the identification of all persons entering the Internet network, and adopt the Digital ID (Digital Certificate) system.
- Strengthen coordination between machineries for the protection of the law in the area of information security, establish unified international standards at the technical level in order to facilitate follow-up, monitoring and coordination and, as a minimum, unify legislative systems in order to maintain national security in accordance with international security requirements.

The Directorate-General for General Security reports that its security communications occur inside Lebanese territory and that there are no external communications. Systems for the protection of internal communications are being improved with the expertise and support of friendly security machineries. However, the necessary equipment is still not in place due to the unavailability of financial and technical resources.

Ministry of National Defence

[Original: Arabic]
[1 May 2007]

The Ministry of National Defence indicates that Lebanon:

- Is committed to ensuring that information technology and wire and wireless means of communication should not be used for purposes incompatible with the concepts of international stability and security;
- Is taking the measures necessary at the national level (improvement and modernization of the relevant regulations and laws) in order to strengthen information security, and encourages the exchange of available information to the parties concerned.

Lebanon respects and cooperates with the United Nations resolutions on the protection of the security and confidentiality of information and prevention of its abuse in any manner and the need to prevent information sources or technology from being used for criminal or terrorist purposes.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[22 May 2007]

1. Mexico supported the resolution on "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security", put forward by the Russian Federation in the General Assembly and attaches great importance to promoting a wider exchange of views on that subject and related concepts. Mexico is of the view that presentations by experts or discussions on the topic might take place in conjunction with the work of the First Committee or other disarmament forums.

2. Most international verification mechanisms arising from international legal instruments or political agreements on export control rely on information media and telecommunications for their effective implementation, and it is of fundamental importance to examine the status of developments in those areas. Moreover, the development of ballistic missile systems and the modernization of nuclear arsenals necessarily entail development of information and telecommunications. In addition, developments in space technology and satellites are unquestionably linked to international security issues.

3. Mexico has consistently drawn attention in the Conference on Disarmament to the urgent need for the Conference to adopt a programme of work which includes as one of its main areas "prevention of an arms race in outer space", an issue linked to that of the vulnerability of space-based information and communications technologies.

4. Mexico considers it important to extend the mandate of the group of governmental experts on the subject, established pursuant to resolution 58/32 and to be re-established in 2009, and believes that broad discussion should be promoted in the interim until that date.

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Sixty-second session
Item 100 (b) of the preliminary list*
General and complete disarmament

Further measures in the field of disarmament for the prevention of an arms race on the seabed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof

Report of the Secretary-General

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* A/62/50.

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I. Introduction

1. At its forty-fourth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 44/116 O of 15 December 1989, entitled "Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof", the relevant operative paragraphs of which read as follows:

> "*The General Assembly*,
>
> "...
>
> "8. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report by 1992, and every three years thereafter until the fourth Review Conference is convened, on technological developments relevant to the Treaty and to the verification of compliance with the Treaty, including dual-purpose technologies for peaceful and specified military ends; in carrying out this task he should draw from official sources and from contributions by States parties to the Treaty and may use the assistance of appropriate expertise;
>
> "9. *Urges* all States parties to the Treaty to assist the Secretary-General accordingly by providing information and drawing his attenti n to suitable sources."

2. Pursuant to the request contained in paragraph 9 of the resolution, a note verbale was sent to States parties to the Treaty inviting them to provide information on the subject. Replies have been received from Lebanon and Mexico, which are reproduced in section II below. Additional replies received from States parties will be issued as addenda to the present report.

3. The Secretary-General wishes to point out that the information submitted to him by States parties to the Treaty does not provide sufficient official material for him to report on the subject matter on the basis indicated in paragraph 8 of the resolution.

II. Information received from Governments

A. Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[1 May 2007]

The Ministry of National Defence states that Lebanon affirms once again that it does not possess, manufacture or stockpile weapons of mass destruction and reaffirms its commitment to the related United Nations resolutions. Consequently, it has no weapons of mass destruction that might be placed on the seabed or the ocean floor.

B. Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[22 May 2007]

1. Mexico encourages the elimination of all nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and in that connection supports international efforts aimed at preventing the emplacement of such weapons on the seabed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof.

2. As a State party to the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof, Mexico encourages the full observance of the Treaty's provisions and consequently the adoption of measures that make possible greater advances aimed at ensuring compliance with the Treaty, in keeping with Mexico's position and the fact that it is legally bound by the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

3. Mexico considers that a fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof would make possible a thorough examination of technological advances that affect compliance with and the monitoring of that international legal instrument, together with other aspects of great importance, such as the relationship of the Treaty with the regimes of nuclear-weapon-free zones and with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea itself. It would therefore be important for there to be a mechanism to permit greater interaction with regard to such information and to study the conditions and possibilities for holding a fourth Conference of the Parties to the Treaty.

4. In the area of nuclear monitoring, Mexico contributes to the work of the International Monitoring System of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which, using modern telecommunications and data-management techniques, observes phenomena throughout the world and collects data that might indicate the possibility of a nuclear test. Mexico does so by means of five monitoring stations, one of which is hydroacoustic station HA06, located on Socorro Island, which helps detect acoustic waves produced in the oceans by both natural and artificial phenomena. The station is certified and fully operative, sending data to the International Data Centre in Vienna.

5. Within this context, it would be important to examine the performance and characteristics of existing international monitoring mechanisms with a view to identifying their specific qualities that might be proposed in respect of the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof.

6. Until such time as a fourth Conference of the Parties to the Treaty is convened, presentations by experts and informative sessions within the framework of the interactive debate within the United Nations General Assembly on technologies related to the Treaty might be sponsored by States parties, scientific and disarmament research institutions or international organizations dealing with such matters.